

Points of the Compass in Kedah.

By A. W. HAMILTON.

Amongst the inland Malays of Kedah more especially in those districts where the Siamese language is still prevalent the usual Malay terms for expressing the points of the compass (utara, sēlatan, timor, barat), are not in use except as designations for the direction of the wind and the seasons dependant on them (*i.e.* angin barat a west wind or musim timor the N. E. monsoon).

The current terms in use in daily life to express the relative positions of objects or the direction of a road, etc. are as under:—

North. Kaki tidor.

South. Kēpala tidor.

East. Mata hari naik.

West. Mata hari jatoh.

A man will thus describe his house as being sabēlah kēpala tidor or South of somebody else's abode; and if asked where he was sitting with reference to another person might reply "dia dudok di sini, dan saya dudok di sabēlah kaki tidor nya" *i.e.* he was sitting here and I was sitting on the north side of him.

The expressions mata hari naik and mata hari jatoh are of course common to the whole peninsula and the sentence dia sudah pērgi sebēlah mata hari naik. He has gone East would be understood anywhere.

The curious local expressions kēpala tidor and kaki tidor appear to have arisen from the invariable orientation of Siamese houses which are built with their axis East and West, the entrance facing the rising sun.

The occupants when lying down for the night in their rather narrow dwellings are thus constrained to lie across the house with heads to the wall and feet to the centre so that all the heads in a village will be pointing one way, kēpala tidor or South, and all the feet another, kaki tidor or North.